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**BOUGHT FROM THE
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THE THREE WISHES

A PLAY FOR MARIONETTES IN TWO ACTS

By HAMILTON G. WILLIAMSON

In conjunction with Tony Sarg

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Characters

MARTIN, a Wood-cutter

MARGARET, the Wood-cutter's Wife

CASPAR, a Friendly Neighbour

A FAIRY

A RABBIT

A DOG

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THE THREE WISHES

ACT I

A wood scene, showing village in background. Discover a Rabbit sitting on tree stump near big oak tree.

RABBIT. *On tree stump, eating, listening, moving ears, etc., etc.; finally jumps off tree stump and goes off stage.*

TWO BUTTERFLIES. *Fly across stage; finally settle on little hill and fly off when bird appears.*

A BIRD. *Circles round trees and is still flying when Martin enters; then they fly off.*

MARTIN. *With axe in hand. He stops a moment, watches the Bird, then goes up to the oak tree. He looks up. Then he lifts axe far enough to spit in hand. He spits. Raises axe for blow. Drops axe and shakes head tiredly. He turns round, and sits on tree stump, and begins to shake his head in despair. His head drops quite low.*

RABBIT. *Appears from behind the tree, plays a bit in front of tree, and is suddenly discovered by Martin.*

MARTIN *(beating the floor with his hand).* Pss — s — Ps — s — Ps —

RABBIT. *Jumps round and starts flirting with Martin.*

MARTIN. Pss — s — Pss — Ps — s —

RABBIT. *Dodges behind the tree.*

MARTIN. *Rises carefully and steps gently up to tree as if ready to catch Rabbit.*

RABBIT. *As soon as Martin reaches tree, runs behind tree up to his hole.*

MARTIN. *Changes to back stage; suddenly discovers Rabbit and gives chase.*

RABBIT. *Disappears in hole.*

MARTIN *(Kneels down and tries to pull Rabbit out. He reaches*

deeper and deeper, and suddenly pulls out his hand with a cry).
Ah — The beggar bit me! (*He walks back to oak tree and, after spitting in hand, once more he sings and chops*)
Tune, "Ach du lieber Augustin."

“Oh, I got a tree to chop!
Tree to chop! Tree to chop!
Oh! I got a tree to chop,
Tree to chop down!”

“It will heat my oven hot,
Oven hot, oven hot.
It will heat my oven hot,
Bake my bread brown.”

VOICE (*inside the tree*). Martin! (*Martin gazes about, listens, then lifts axe*) Martin!

MARTIN (*peering around*). Margaret! It can't be wife Margaret. Not her voice! Too early for dinner. I dreamed it.
[*He lifts his axe.*]

VOICE. Martin.

MARTIN (*lowering his axe and looking around*). Hey there!
Who's calling?

VOICE. I'm in the tree!

MARTIN (*looking up*). Where? I don't see you. Come down!

VOICE. I'm inside the tree! I can't get out.

MARTIN. Inside the tree? Nonsense!

VOICE. Listen, Martin. I'm a fairy, an unfortunate fairy.

MARTIN. A fairy! Bah! I don't believe that!

VOICE. It's true! I'm Zimmerimbimba. Imprisoned in this tree for a hundred years!

MARTIN (*laughing*). And the moon is made of green cheese!

VOICE. Don't make fun of me, Martin! It's true. Let me out. The tree is hollow. Cut a hole in the bark.

MARTIN. How do I know you're not the two-horned devil himself, waiting to pop out and catch me!

VOICE. I'll stick my hand through this little hole where a branch has fallen out. See?

MARTIN (*looks up and then walks round to look at the little hand*).
 They say the devil has claws, and it's a pink little hand. It
 must be a young lady fairy. (*Walks back*) Well, out you
 come. [*He spits and then chops*.

VOICE. Don't cut too deep, Martin. You might hurt me.
 Just one stroke more.

MARTIN. Ay! Ay! (*He gives final blow, bark falls, Fairy ap-
 pears. Martin drops on his knees*) Wonderful lady!—I
 never saw a fairy before!—Don't hurt me! Don't harm me!

FAIRY. Harm you! I shall reward you. Oh—how good to
 see the sun after a hundred years of darkness! Tell me,
 how do I look? I used to be extremely pretty.

MARTIN. Beautiful! And very young looking for your age.

FAIRY. What a relief! You see, when I was quite a young
 girl, not a day over eight hundred, an old dwarf,—a sor-
 cerer,—wanted to marry me. He was hideous, so, of course,
 I refused. He flew into a rage, and shut me in this tree for
 a hundred years. The time is up, to-day, and you've set
 me free! Oh, how can I thank you? What would you like
 as a reward?

MARTIN. I don't know what to ask, Ma'am. My brain is
 spinning like a squirrel in a cage.

FAIRY. I know what to give you, Martin! Something splen-
 did! Three wonderful wishes! Here is a ring. Whoever
 wears it may have three wishes come true.

MARTIN (*taking the ring*). Oh, thank you, Miss—Ma'am.
 Thank you!

FAIRY. But only three! So, be careful what you wish for.
 It's easy to waste wishes, but if you choose wisely, you're
 made for life. (*She sails away*) Choose wisely, Martin,
 wisely—wisely!

MARTIN (*following fairy with his eyes; then suddenly beating his
 head*). Wake up, Martin! No, no. I am awake! There's
 the oak. Here's my axe—and here's the ring. It's all true!
 Oh, you precious ring! Oh, you beautiful fairy! I'm a
 made man! I wish—careful! No careless wishes! I'll con-
 sult wife Margaret, first, and then the schoolmaster, and the

lawyer, before I wish at all. How lucky I am! Jimminy Cricket! I could jump for joy! (*He sings to tune of "Ach du lieber Augustin"*):

Hip — ey! Hip -- o Hip! Hurray!
Hip! Hurrah! Hip! Hurray!

[*And exits — jumping.*]

CURTAIN

ACT II

Interior of Martin's home.

Discover Margaret, dozing. Bird begins to sing. Dog wakens and barks.

MARGARET (*wakens*). Here, you Fritz! Fritz! Leave old Draggie-tail alone. (*She whistles*) Will you stop barking (*she stamps*), and be a good dog? (*Fritz shakes head*) Don't you love your mistress? (*Fritz sits up*) Oh! Oh! (*Fritz flirts on hind legs*) Come here, Fritz! (*Fritz runs about, barking; finally sits opposite Margaret*) You hungry, Fritz? (*Fritz nods*) You want some meat? (*Fritz nods*) Well, you won't get it! There's no meat in this house. (*Fritz puts head down*) Poor master means poor dog. We get potatoes, morning-noon-and-night. Nothing but potatoes! I forget what meat smells like. Dear old Fritz, *come here!* Hep, hep! [*She pats Fritz's head and makes a fuss over dog. Music of "Augustine" is heard. The Dog begins to bark.*]

MARGARET (*listens*). What's that? (*The Bird begins to sing; the Dog barks*) Stop your noise! Stop it. I hear something. It can't be Martin. Not this early! It sounds like Martin. It is Martin.

MARTIN (*appearing at window, still singing "Hip-o-Hurray"*). Halloo — there! Ha, ha, pigs-joul for me — corned beef! Where's the butcher — call the butcher! Ho — ho — ha — ha —

MARGARET. What ails the man, home so early! [*Dog barks, jumping near entrance.*]

MARTIN (*tumbles in and while picking himself up*). When luck comes into a house, it tumbles in at the door, and I've proved it. (*Dog barks once. Martin steps on chair*) Margaret, drop me a curtsy. I'm as grand a man as the Duke, or I will be. (*Dog barks again*) We've done with poverty. (*Dog barks*) We've done with potatoes. (*Dog barks*) Throw them to the neighbours' pigs. I'm drunk with joy! (*Dog barks*) Be quiet — Fritz. (*Martin jumps down and kicks Fritz*) Quiet, I say —

MARGARET (*sobbing*). Drunk!

MARTIN. Hold your whoop, woman, and look here. Look! [*He holds out ring.*]

MARGARET. Oh-h, a ring! Is it gold?

MARTIN. Aye, and more! (*Leaning forward, and whispering*) A beautiful lady gave it to me!

MARGARET. I don't believe it! What lady would be giving you a ring? You, who look like the latter end of an old goat! [*Sits down.*]

MARTIN. Hold your tongue. A fairy gave it to me!

MARGARET (*angered*). A fairy! Really a fairy?

MARTIN. I'll tell you all about it. (*He walks over behind Margaret's chair*) I let her out of a tree.

MARGARET. What!

MARTIN. Look at it again! (*Margaret gazes*) It's enchanted. It's a wishing ring!

MARGARET. Oh-h-h — no!

MARTIN. Three wishes, she says —

MARGARET. Do you believe it, Martin? Do you really believe it? Let's try it now. Let's wish that —

MARTIN (*interrupting*). Hush, woman, — don't pop a wish out like that. — Look, there's something written in the ring.

MARGARET. What does it say?

MARTIN (*reading*).

“Just three wishes small or grand
Come true if I'm on your hand;
When wishing, choose with greatest care,
For wasted wishes bring despair!”

MARGARET. Oh-h, Martin, how shall we ever know what to ask?

MARTIN. I'm going to the schoolmaster and the doctor and the lawyer, and find out what are the three grandest things a man can set his heart on.

MARGARET. Go — do it now!

MARTIN (*starts walking away*). I'll go right away.

MARGARET. Wait — Martin. Somebody might steal the ring! (*Martin turns*) Leave it here — leave it with me.

MARTIN. Women are light-headed creatures. They mean well — but I —

MARGARET (*interrupting*). Leave that ring with me!

MARTIN (*goes up to Margaret, and gives ring*). Mind you — It's a sacred charge, Margaret. Mind, you don't — (*A knock*) Who would that be now?

MARGARET. Neighbour Caspar, most likely. I promised him a cup o' ale!

MARTIN. Caspar! He's the biggest tattle-tale in the parish! Don't breathe a word o' the ring to him, or we couldn't shut the door for the neighbours' noses in the crack. Come in, Caspar.

CASPAR. Good morning, Mistress Margaret and neighbour Martin. (*He steps forward*) Did you think you'd rest a spell? You're home early!

MARTIN. Yes, Caspar, it struck me that wood-chopping is no trade for a man of my intellect, so I dropped my axe and came home. You'll excuse me now. I've business to attend to.

CASPAR. Business? What might it be?

MARTIN. Important business. Too deep for a plain, simple man like you.

CASPAR. Two heads are better than one.

MARTIN. That's why I'm going to consult the Duke. (*He bows*) Good-day to ya! [*He leaves. Caspar sits on table. Margaret walks over and sits down.*]

CASPAR. Consult the Duke! — Has the man birds in his brain, Margaret?

MARGARET. Maybe he has and maybe he hasn't. Strange things have happened this day — Master Caspar! I'm fit to jump out of my skin with joy!

CASPAR (*laughing*). Then jump back into a handsomer one.

MARGARET. What's that you say?

CASPAR. Margaret, a secret, unshared, burdens the heart. [*He puts his arm round Margaret.*]

MARGARET. It's no use! I won't tell you.

CASPAR. Please, Margaret! I wouldn't tell a soul.

MARGARET. Will you promise, Caspar?

CASPAR. I promise.

MARGARET. It's such good news, I can't keep it.

CASPAR. Out with it!

MARGARET (*holding out her hand*). Caspar, look at this ring. It's a fairy gift — *Three Wishes*.

CASPAR. Oh, what luck! What fine luck to drink to! (*He looks about and smacks his lips*) Rare luck to drink to!! (*Smacks his lips again*) I'm your friend, Margaret. — Drink to your luck any day. Don't forget that. Your old friend Caspar!

MARGARET. I'll be the finest lady in the village!

CASPAR. And me her best friend!

MARGARET. I'll have a coach.

CASPAR. And me riding in it.

MARGARET. And horses.

CASPAR. And me behind them.

MARGARET. I'll have grand dinners.

CASPAR. I'll come to them. I will that.

MARGARET (*gets up*). Oh, Caspar, I'm that excited. (*She dances to other chair*) I don't know what to wish.

CASPAR. *Gets up from table, walks to dresser, and looks about for mug; upsets some plates.*

MARGARET. What are you looking for? (*Caspar upsets dishes*) Clumsy!

CASPAR (*turns to Margaret, — turns his head about*). Where are the mugs?

MARGARET. Why, don't you know, — upstairs in the cupboard is a full mug waiting for you!

CASPAR. Ah, upstairs. (*Walks up the steps humming song. Looks into cupboard*) I can't see a mug.

MARGARET. Way back, Caspar! It's a full mug.

CASPAR (*puts his hand in and reaches*). My, what a reach! (*Pulls out mug*) Well, here's good luck, and long live the fairy! (*Starts going down the steps, singing. Tune: "Grad aus dem Wirtshaus"*)

"Here's to your good health,
Full is the ale cup.
Poverty turns to wealth,
Joy bubbles up."

(*Goes on humming, till he sits down*) Well, Margo, here's wishing you three fine meals a day and a stomach to welcome them all. [*He drinks.*]

MARGARET. Slowly man, slowly. That ale's worth tasting.

CASPAR (*gulping and coughing and wheezing*). Ah-h — it is that!

MARGARET. You drink too fast. It's *no* compliment.

CASPAR (*hiccoughs*). Ah — hic — he. That came as welcome as a mouse to a cat's party. Makes me feel fine. *Fine*, Margaret! Fi — (*hic*) — ne. Where shall I put the mug?

MARGARET. Put it on the shelf in the next room. [*Exit Caspar.*]

CASPAR (*off stage*). Fine, Margo, fine.

(*Sings melody, "Lauterbach"*)

"Sauerkraut, sausages, butter and bread,
Good ale that goes to your head.
So stamp on your troubles,
Kick care out the door
And dance with your neighbour instead."

(*He is standing in front of Margaret*)

"So pick up your petticoats, come and dance,
Hop lightly and join in the song.
In cheering up others
You cheer up yourself,
And the man who lives gaily lives long."

(*He throws his head back and laughs long*) Ho — ho — ha — ha [— and sits on Margaret's lap.

MARGARET. Get up, Caspar, — how dare you!

CASPAR (*still laughing*). Say, Margo, when you get your three wishes, life will be one song and dance. Come on, Margo, let's dance! [*He gets up and dances, joined later by Margaret. Dance with encore, if necessary. Margaret falls exhausted into chair.*

CASPAR (*Stretches exhausted on table. He yawns, stretches legs and arms, and then sits up*). Do you know, Margaret, what I feel like now?

MARGARET. I suppose you'll be saying another cup of ale!

CASPAR. No, no — let us have some sausages.

MARGARET. It's so long since I've tasted sausages, I'd not know one if it bowed to me.

CASPAR (*getting off table*). Yes — (*Turns round*) Sausages, nice, crisp, crackling, brown sausages.

MARGARET. Sizzling in the pan.

CASPAR. Brown and bursting! Oh — oh!

MARGARET. Oh, I wish we had some sausages — now! [*Flash of lightning, thunder. Margaret and Caspar fall flat on floor in terror. Sausages are on the table.*

CASPAR (*raising his head in terror*). Are you alive?

MARGARET. I don't know, — are you?

CASPAR. What happened? — It was like a flash of lightning!

MARGARET. What would lightning be doing on a fair day?

CASPAR. It left a pleasant smell behind it, though. Sniff now. (*They both sniff*) If I told you what my nose says, you'd laugh. (*She sniffs*) It says, sausages!

MARGARET. It *does* smell like sausages, new fried!

CASPAR. It's stronger *this* side. (*He rises slowly, looks down at sausages*) Look! It's your wish come true!

MARGARET. Where? [*Getting up*.

CASPAR. There, as I am alive, a plateful of sausages!

MARGARET (*sobbing*). Oh — oh! Sausages!!

CASPAR. Hush — hush, woman. It's no sorrow. It's a blessing.

MARGARET. It's a wish come true. Martin will beat me. One wish gone out of the ring. Oh — oh — oh!

CASPAR (*smelling sausages*). Nothing is wrong with these sausages. They're good to eat! (*Margaret sobs*) It's true — you might have wished for a cart-load. Martin couldn't have got mad at *that*! Let's sit down and eat the dish clean and not tell him a word about it. He'll think the fairy cheated him. They're deceitful things, those fairies!

MARGARET. Well, I don't want a beating. Sit down, eat quick and we'll stuff —

DOG. *Runs across stage towards entrance door and barks.*

MARGARET. Be quiet, Fritz! — Oh, he hears Martin. (*Margaret's voice is heard outside*) He'll be as mad as murder. (*Caspar get up and begins walking off stage*) Stop, Caspar, — I won't take all the blame alone! It was your fault!

CASPAR. I think I left my cap outside. [*Exit Caspar.*]

MARGARET. Come back, you coward! [*Dog enters, barking and jumping. Martin follows. Margaret is sobbing on the table.*]

MARTIN. It's all settled in the wisest way. We're to have — What's that smell? (*Looks at Margaret*) What's the matter with you, Margaret? (*Looks at sausages*) Sausages! Where'd they come from?

MARGARET. It was all Caspar's fault! It was. He sang and danced, and addled my brain! His mouth watered for sausages. Before I knew it I was wishing for them! — woroo — woroo!

MARTIN. You wished for sausages and you had the ring?

MARGARET (*sobbing*). I forgot all about the ring.

MARTIN (*walking over to Margaret*). So you've wasted a fairy wish. I'll show you! Take that and that! [*Beats her.*]

MARGARET. Help, Caspar — help, Caspar! [*Caspar appears a moment, but immediately runs away as Martin continues his beating.*]

MARTIN. Take that — I'll teach you to be wasting wishes! —



THE THREE WISHES
Act II.

Martin. — “Cripes, I wish they were growing to the end of
your nose!!!”

Where's the ring? — Give me back that ring! (*Margaret hands back ring to Martin*) Only two wishes left in it now. Cripes, I could bite my thumbs off!

CASPAR (*reappearing*). Be quiet, Martin, two wishes are enough for a simple, quiet man like you! Be sensible. Sit down with us and eat the sausages.

MARGARET. Do, Martin, — they taste like a salted rainbow!

MARTIN. What, eat sausages with you! — You, who have wasted a wish between you!! Cripes, I wish they were growing to the end of your nose!!! (*Flash of lightning. Martin falls flat. Margaret falls on table and Caspar over back of chair*) What was that?

CASPAR. Another wish come true! It's a rough way the fairies have.

MARTIN (*getting up*). Another wish! What wish?

CASPAR. That the sausages were grown on Margaret's nose.

MARTIN. What do you mean?

MARGARET. It's true — it's true! They're grown to me as fast as the tail to a cat. Oh-h-h! I'm a ruined woman. Look — look!

MARTIN. They can't be grown to you. Caspar! Pull them off!

CASPAR (*touching them*). Aw! They're hot — they burnt me.

MARGARET. Oh — oh — I am a ruined woman!

CASPAR (*laughing inwardly*). Never mind. It's not every woman who can nibble her own nose for breakfast! [*He laughs*].

MARTIN. Stop laughing. I tell you — stop! Two wishes gone! Two — aw, what good's the third. What good to be rich like the Duke with that beside me for a wife! (*He points to Margaret*) Look at her — look! An elephant with his nose in curl paper. (*Caspar gives suppressed laughter*.) Stop swinging them, I say! I can't bear it! This ring has brought nothing but torment. By magic they came and by magic they must go. I wish the sausages were off Margaret's nose! [*Thunder and lightning. Martin, Margaret and Caspar fall to the floor. The Fairy appears*].

FAIRY. So all three wishes came to naught!
You know I rather thought they would,
For idle longing never brings
To wise or foolish any good.
If fools could have the things they wish,
By wishing what they wanted to,
Imagine what a snarl the world
Would be in, — in a day or two.
And wise folks, when they want a thing,
Don't need the fairies' help a bit;
They just make sure they want it first,
Then go ahead and work for it!

CURTAIN



